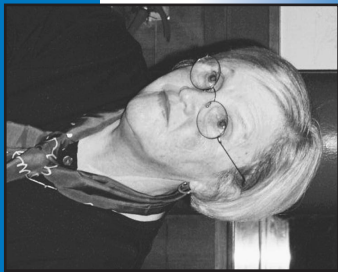


Local Bonding

The bond package (SA 05-1) approved \$50,000 for renovations and improvements to the Westport Firehouse. The School Construction bill (PA 05-6) included \$10,488,133 for the Bethel High School, and new funding was approved in the amount of \$12,234,112 for the New Canaan High School, as well as \$3,448,049 for the Greensfarms Elementary School in Westport.

Of Further Interest . . .

- The General Assembly did not act on a resolution to begin the process for amending the State Constitution to require full funding of the Teacher's Retirement System.
- The bill that passed addressing the issue of affordable insurance for Medical Malpractice actually skirts around the issue and does not give the medical profession immediate relief.
- Health Insurance policies will now cover infertility diagnosis and treatment.
- Connecticut's farm wineries will be able to ship their wine directly to Connecticut consumers, while establishing procedures for in state and out-of-state sales.



How to Reach Me:
Mail

Senator Judith G. Freedman
Room 2800, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106 - 1591

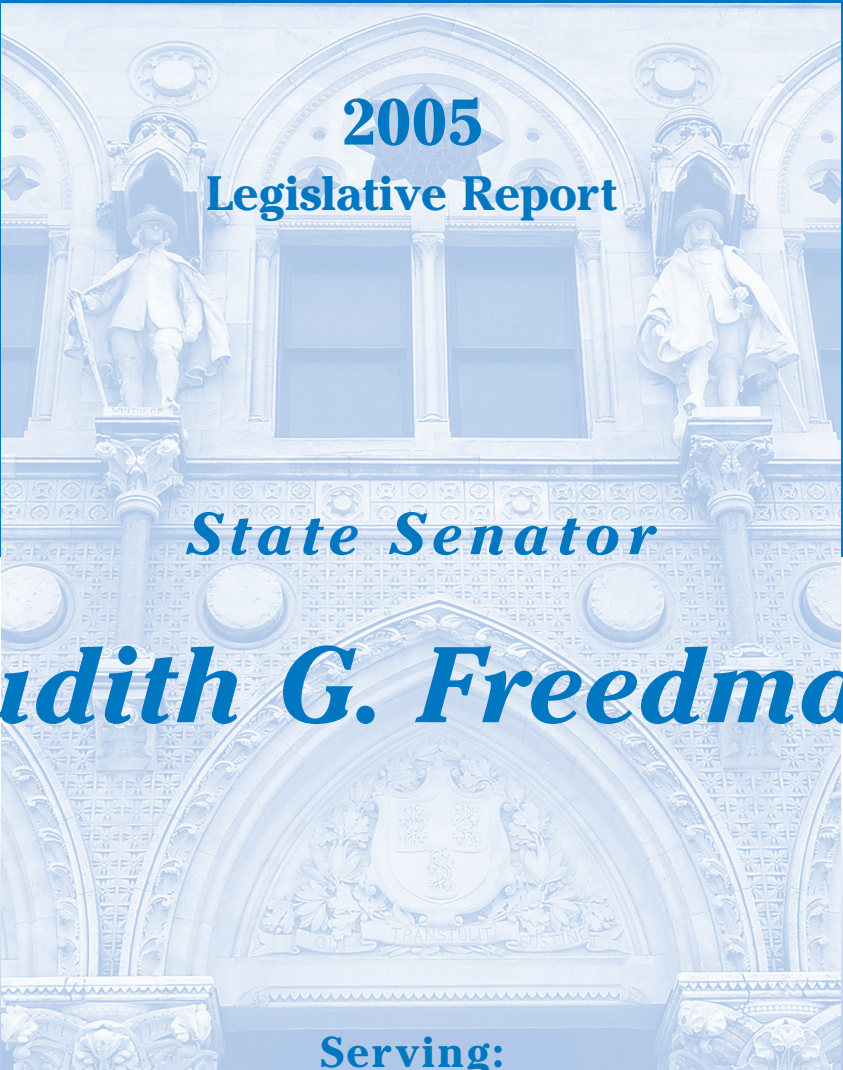
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Dear Constituents:

The General Assembly completed its work, once again by going into extra innings. A lot of time was wasted on legislation that ultimately did not make it into law. I have tried to highlight some of important pieces of legislation that did pass.

The biennial state budget increases taxes on business, increases spending by 8.7 percent this year and does not establish responsible priorities for the state.

The Governor vetoed legislation pushed through by the majority during the recent special session. It was a stealth amendment that barred the privatization of most state services for the next two years and, in the process, severely hurt some of our state's most vulnerable citizens, such as mentally retarded adults waiting for placement into community group homes.

I want to take this opportunity to reassure everyone that I share the concern of the many people who contacted me in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the New London eminent domain case. The right to own one's own home is a right held dear by all of us and the government should not be able to seize a person's property except under the most extraordinary circumstances, and only then as an absolute last resort. I assure you I will pursue this issue.

The least we can do now is to enact a moratorium on this issue until legislation is adopted with clear and precise definitions.

I wish you a safe and relaxing summer. If you are interested in learning more about the issues discussed in this newsletter, or others addressed by the General Assembly, please contact me in Hartford at 1-800-842-1421, or by e-mail at Judith.G.Freedman@cga.ct.gov.

Sincerely,



Judith G. Freedman
State Senator – 26th District

Estate Tax PA 05-251

Establishes a unified estate and gift tax, retroactive to January 1, 2005 to be imposed on taxable gifts and estates that exceed a combined lifetime total of \$2 million

- Repeals phasing out the succession and gift taxes

State Contracting Reform PA 05-287

Subjects certain contractors to state ethics laws and civil or criminal penalties for violating them

- Authorizes certain contract extensions; and requires state agencies to obtain from certain contractors an affidavit identifying consultants who worked with them on that contract

Teenage License Changes PA 05-54

Requires 16- and 17-year-olds with driving permits to have 20 hours of behind-the-wheel instruction before qualifying for a license

- Prohibits 16- and 17-year-old licensed drivers from driving between midnight and 5 a.m. with exceptions

Safe Driving PA 05-159

Effective October 1, prohibits drivers from using hand-held phones unless they are communicating an emergency

- Prohibits 16- and 17-year old drivers from using cell phones with, or without, hands-free devices

Gift Cards PA 05-189

Exempts the value of gift cards from state law that deems most types of property held or owed in this state to be abandoned if the owner fails to claim it after three years

Stem Cell Research PA 05-149

Permits stem cell research under strictly spelled out conditions and according to strictly spelled out ethical protocols and bans the cloning of human beings



Senator Freedman with Governor Rell at the signing of PA 05-188

Voting PA 05-188

Requires the State Elections Enforcement Commission to conduct a study of the use of push polling in Connecticut campaigns

- Requires all new electronic voting machines to leave a paper trail

Transportation PA 05-4

\$1.3 billion initiative to fund rail cars, buses and highway improvements

- \$667 million for new rail cars on Metro-North's New Haven Line
- \$300 million for new rail maintenance facilities
- \$187 million for "congestion mitigation" on I-95 from Greenwich to North Stonington
- \$150 million for improvements to I-84 and I-91, along with other state roads and highways
- \$75 million for new transit buses